

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I "grew up" in radio. My dad managed and subsequently owned a successful small market AM radio station from the late 1940s until it was sold in the mid-1970s. Programming was typical of the era: diverse and interesting. It was community oriented in every sense of the word, much as Washington, DC's WMAL was up until the early '90s.

Understanding and accepting that change is inevitable, I nonetheless lament the passing of the "local model" for radio. Although I enjoy and regularly listen to some of the lineup offered by WMAL, for example, I realize that I'm no longer listening to WMAL, but rather using them as an outlet for the programs I desire to hear. Little of their programming style bears any resemblance to WMAL I enjoyed when moving to the DC area in 1971.

This isn't a complaint. Again, it's just an acknowledgement that radio, as I'd like to find it, doesn't exist anymore.

Fortunately I've discovered an alternative in XM radio. It offers what I want to hear. There's variety and choice.

I also appreciate the fact that local traffic and weather is available through XM. Why the NAB is making an issue of this is really beyond me... well, not really. The argument is purely self serving, of course (which is understandable), but is it an argument that's really in the spirit of (if I remember the correct phrase) "operating in the public trust?" I don't think so.

And besides, traditional radio is in really big trouble if the threat is that of a competitor offering, for crying out loud, local traffic and weather... or for that matter, anything that's locally oriented.

I'll listen to local radio outlets to the extent that they continue to serve my interests. But, the bottom line for me is this: I like the concept of XM and Sirius, and I want the opportunity to access local traffic and weather via that source. And, if XM figures out a way to "bring back my dad's station," in the "local sense," I'll probably gravitate to that as well.

Respectfully submitted.